

Welcome

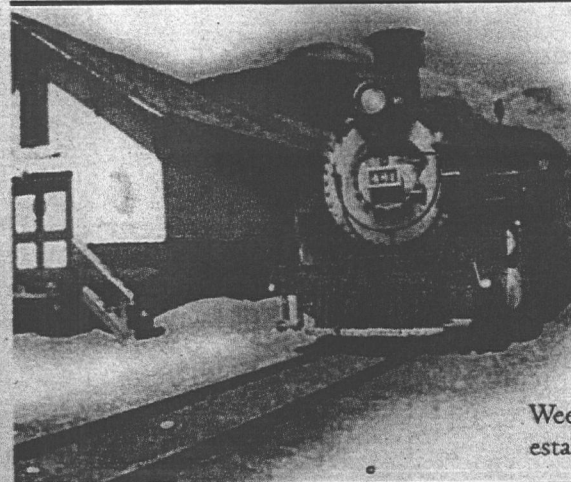
Great Western
Rocky Mtn.

Special Section
INSIDE

Brass Band Festival

Free Concerts Friday,
Saturday & Sunday

Volume 137, issue 8 August 18, 2011



Weekly Miner
established 1875

Silverton STANDARD & the MINER

SILVERTON'S PIONEER NEWSPAPER SINCE 1875

Silverton Standard
established 1889

IN BRIEF

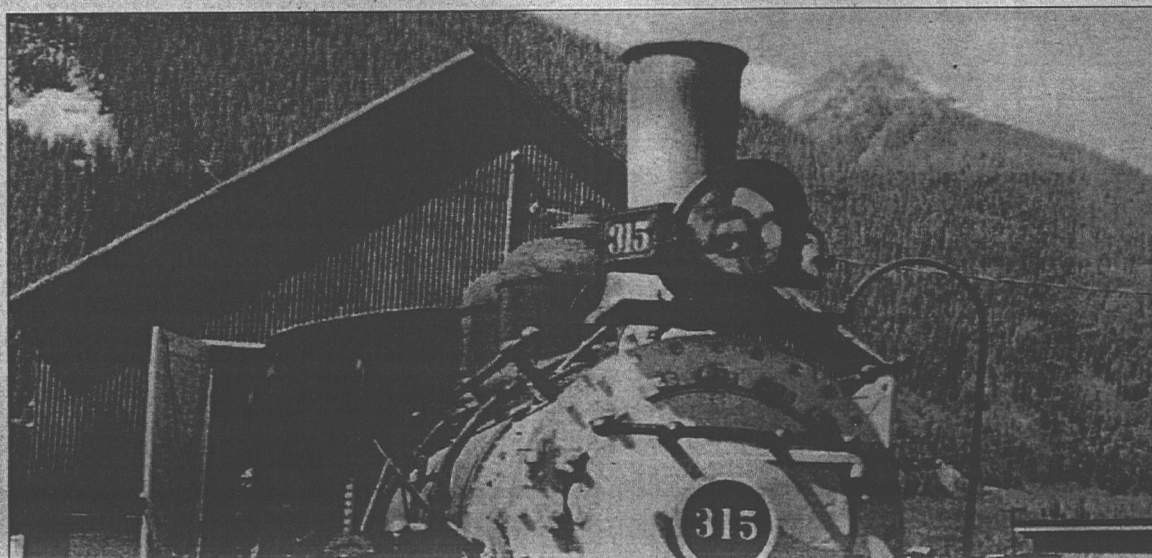
Alpine Loop Mining History Tour Friday

The Alpine Loop Mining History Tour will be held on Friday, Aug. 19, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Jump in your 4-wheel drive vehicle and drive the Alpine Loop Back Country Byway for a day of fun and informative interpretation of historic mining in the San Juan Mountains.

Interpreters will be posted at historic mining sites between Lake City and Silverton, Colorado. Stop at the Silverton and Lake City Chambers of Commerce or the Bureau of Land Management Public Lands Centers for a map.

Old trains to roll for Railfest



Galloping Goose, E&P wood-burner to ride rails

The 13th Annual Railfest this weekend will be celebrated with the theme of "30 Years as the D&SNG."

C. E. Bradshaw bought the railroad in 1981, probably saving from the fate of most of the narrow-gauge railroads. He renamed it the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad.

Association backpack trip is Aug. 20-21

The San Juan Mountain Association, in partnership with San Juan Public Lands, is offering a free backpacking trip Aug. 20 and 21.

Whether you are new to backpacking or want to share your experience with others, this trip will be a fun and educational adventure. The trip will travel along the Cascade Creek Trail in the San Juan National Forest. An optional informational meeting will precede the trip. Space is limited so reserve your spot today by calling (970) 759-9113 or e-mail MK@sjma.org.

The San Juan Mountains Association, in partnership with San Juan Public Lands, promotes responsible care of natural and cultural resources through education and hands-on involvement that inspires respect and reverence for our lands.

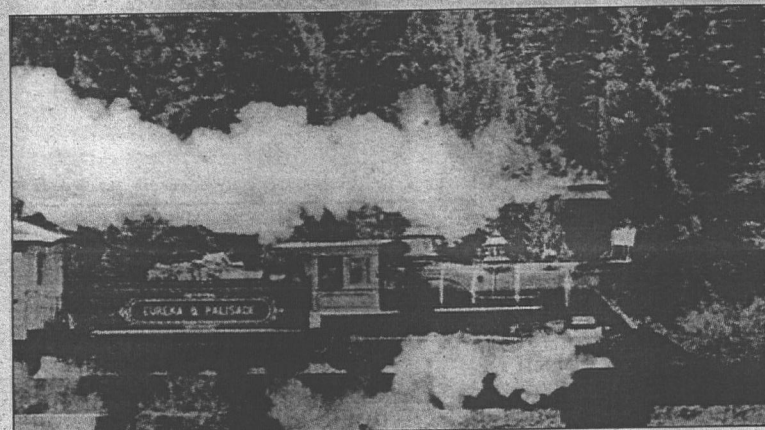
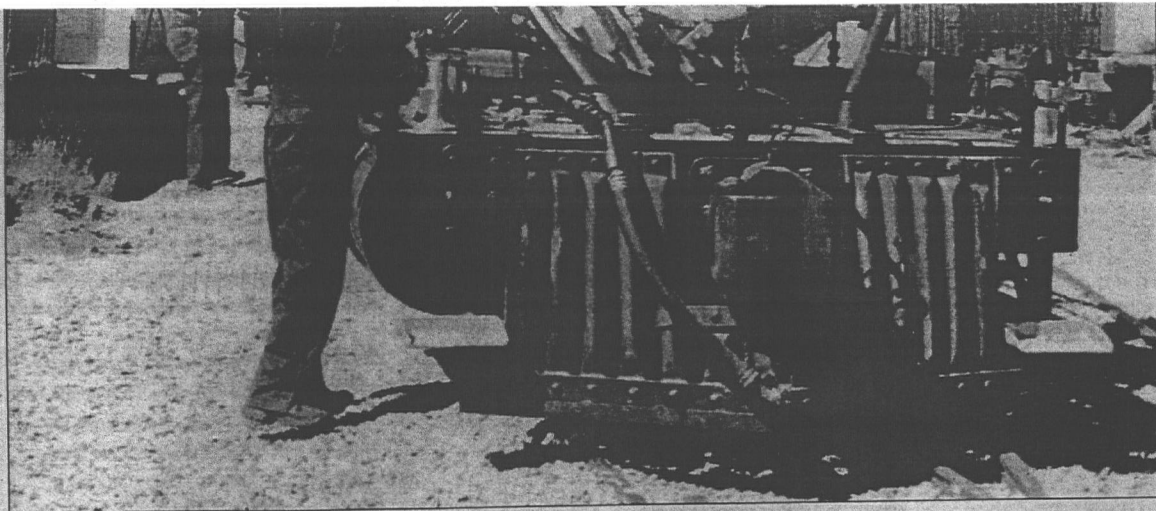
For more information on this local nonprofit organization, visit its website www.sjma.org.

Quilts on display

Silverton Threads, a nonprofit group of quilters, bead-ers, knitters, and crafters of all kinds, have a display of quilts and quilted items in the window at 1143 Greene St., east of the Brown Bear Cafe.

The items are the result of the group's contest, which involved making something from black and white and one other color.

See BRIEFS, Page 4



ABOVE: The Denver & Rio Grande Western Engine #315 gets some TLC after being pulled out of the Silverton Northern engine house Wednesday. It and the Casey Jones rail bus will be on display there for Railfest.

LEFT: The wood-burning Eureka & Palisades locomotive dating from 1875 will be back in Silverton this weekend for Railfest.

railroad has invited Bradshaw, along with other management and staff from that era, to ride a Reunion Train with many of our premium class cars, appetizer and dessert buffets, live music and dinner at Silverton's Bent Elbow.

The Historical Photographer's Train is Saturday.

The inaugural Parade of Trains in 2010 was such a hit that the railroad will again offer this popular event bringing a train or other rolling stock into the Durango yard about every 10 minutes. Just like any parade, please line up along the route and bring lawn chairs if you wish. Very limited seating will be available in the Durango yard.

Today the North American Railcar Operators Association (NARCOA) Arriving in Silverton to set up for Friday's trip.

Special trains to and from Silverton over the weekend include:

See RAILFEST, Page 9

A candidate for Superfund listing?

Last fall the Environmental Protection Agency conducted extensive water and soil sampling in the upper Cement Creek area to see if the area may qualify as a Superfund site.

And this evening (Thursday, Aug. 18) the EPA will present its findings at a community meeting at Silverton Town Hall at 7 p.m., presented by the Animas River Stakeholders Group.

EPA to announce whether upper Cement Creek is eligible for National Priority List

The creek has long been considered one of the worst sources of metals contamination of the upper Animas River basin, owing to water gushing from abandoned mines in the Gladstone area.

And the water quality in the creek appears to be worsening,

said Sabrina Forrest, site assessment manager for the EPA in Denver.

Forrest said the EPA conducted a preliminary assessment to determine if the complex of mines near Gladstone could qualify for the National Priorities List, which would make it eligible for the so-

called Superfund.

Superfund is officially called the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act.

Enacted by Congress in 1980, it created a tax on the chemical and petroleum industry to establish a trust fund for major environmental cleanups.

See EPA, Page 3

Superfund: About the law

The Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), commonly known as Superfund, was enacted by Congress on Dec. 11, 1980.

This law created a tax on the chemical and petroleum industries and provided broad Federal authority to respond directly to releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances that may endanger public health or the environment.

Over five years, \$1.6 billion was collected and the tax went to a trust fund for cleaning up abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. CERCLA:

- established prohibitions and requirements concerning closed and abandoned hazardous waste sites;

- provided for liability of persons responsible for releases of hazardous waste at these sites; and established a trust fund to provide for cleanup when no responsible party could be identified.

As of March 26, 2010, there were 1,279 Superfund sites on the National Priorities List in the United States. Sixty-one additional sites have been proposed for entry on the list. As of March 26, 2010, 341 sites have been cleaned-up and removed from the list.

As of May 1, 2010, there were 18 Superfund sites on the National Priorities List in Colorado. Two more sites have been proposed for entry on the list and three others have been cleaned up and removed from it.

EPA, from Page 1

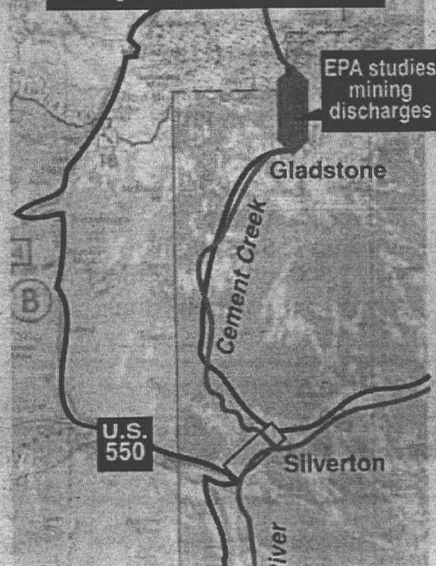
And the law provides for liability of persons responsible for releases of hazardous wastes.

The first step of the process for listing Superfund sites is for the EPA to do a preliminary assessment and inspection. If the site is deemed hazardous enough, it is placed on a National Priorities List and a plan is developed to remediate the contamination.

"This meeting is to talk about options and get community input," Forrest said. She said the EPA will present results Thursday from the fall 2010 sampling conducted by EPA contractor URS Operating Services.

The preliminary assess-

Possible Superfund site



Cement Creek's complex problem

Cement Creek has seen a steady increase in metals loading since a treatment plant for mine runoff at Gladstone was shut down in 2004.

That shutdown was the result of a court order in a lawsuit involving a complicated property dispute.

The water treatment plant had been operating since the early 1980s, in conjunction with the Sunnyside Mine, which closed in 1991.

Just above the site in Gladstone where the treatment plant once stood lies the portal to the American Tunnel, which was sealed starting in the late 1990s by a series of three bulkheads.

It was hoped the bulkheads would limit discharge of contaminated water from the mine, and for a time, that appeared to be the case.

But about four years ago it was noticed that discharges of water from other mines was increasing.

Now, about 250 gallons per minute are gushing from the Gold King Mine opening above the tunnel. The Mogul and the Red and Bonita mines are also showing increases in discharge as water has risen some 1,000 feet above the American

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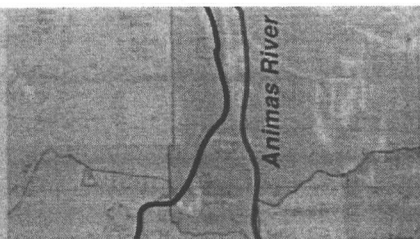


if interested
Contact Kyle or Tiffany
970.387.5887

Operating Services.

The preliminary assessment work focuses on a cluster of mine sites at and above Gladstone, including the American Tunnel, Gold King Number 7 level, the Mogul and Grand Mogul and the Red and Bonita mines.

Water quality in Cement Creek has gone downhill since 2005 when a treatment plant at Gladstone went off line.



"That's when we started to see more degraded water quality beginning," Forrest said.

Since the mid 1990s, the EPA has worked with the Animas

increases in discharge as water has risen some 1,000 feet above the American Tunnel level after the bulkheads were put in there.

River Stakeholders Group on a collaborative process for water quality improvements. But the worsening situation on Cement Creek has compelled EPA officials to see if the site qualifies for Superfund listing.

Superfund process at a glance

The Superfund cleanup process begins with site discovery or notification to EPA of possible releases of hazardous substances. Sites are discovered by various parties, including citizens, State agencies, and EPA Regional offices.

Once discovered, sites are entered into the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Information System (CERCLIS), EPA's computerized inventory of potential hazardous substance release sites (search CERCLIS for hazardous waste sites).

Some sites may be cleaned up under other authorities. EPA then evaluates the potential for a release of hazardous substances from the site through these steps in the Superfund cleanup process.

Community involvement, enforcement, and emergency response can occur at any time in the process. A wide variety of characterization, monitoring, and remediation technologies are used through the cleanup process:

- **Preliminary Assessment/Site Inspection:** Investigations of site conditions. If the release of hazardous substances requires immediate or short-term response actions, these are addressed under the Emergency Response program of Superfund.

- **National Priorities List (NPL) Site Listing Process:** A list of the most serious sites identified for possible long-term cleanup.

- **Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study:**

Determines the nature and extent of contamination. Assesses the treatability of site contamination and evaluates the potential performance and cost of treatment technologies.

- **Records of Decision:** Explains which cleanup alternatives will be used at NPL sites. When remedies exceed 25 million, they are reviewed by the National Remedy Review Board.

- **Remedial Design/Remedial Action:** Preparation and implementation of plans and specifications for applying site remedies. The bulk of the cleanup usually occurs during this phase. All new fund-financed remedies are reviewed by the National Priorities Panel.

- **Construction Completion:** Identifies completion of physical cleanup construction, although this does not necessarily indicate whether final cleanup levels have been achieved.

- **Post Construction Completion:** Ensures that Superfund response actions provide for the long-term protection of human health and the environment. Included here are Long-Term Response Actions (LTRA), Operation and Maintenance, Institutional Controls, Five-Year Reviews, Remedy Optimization.

- **National Priorities List Deletion:** Removes a site from the NPL once all response actions are complete and all cleanup goals have been achieved.

Source: Environmental Protection Agency



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